



Town of Darien

Health Department

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January is National Radon Action Month

The Darien Health Department advises residents to test their homes for radon gas especially now that many families are spending more time indoors at home.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless, tasteless radioactive gas that is found throughout the US. Most of the time, it is harmlessly dispersed in outdoor air, but it can reach harmful levels when trapped in buildings and homes. Exposure to elevated levels of radon has been shown to cause lung damage and cancer in humans. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. In fact, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that radon is responsible for more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths per year.

The only way to know if your home has elevated radon levels is to test. Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple. Inexpensive radon test kits can be purchased at home improvement stores for under \$25.00, or can be obtained free while supplies last at the Darien Health Department. When discovered, radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors at a reasonable cost by the installation of ventilation systems, sealing entry routes for radon gas and/or installing sub-slab depressurization systems to reduce radon levels.

Radon gas is drawn into a house through foundation cracks and openings, such as sump pump pits and plumbing features. ***The lower levels of your home tend to have the highest levels of radon and pose the highest risk.*** Radon levels vary seasonally and tend to be higher in the winter months. The best time to test for radon is during the winter when the home is closed up and the furnace is running. The US EPA recommends that homes with radon levels at four or more picocuries per liter (pCi/L) of air have mitigation systems installed. Even if the radon test result is below 4 pCi/L, additional testing should be done at some point in the future, especially if you occupy the lower level of your home, or planning a renovation, such as converting an unfinished basement area into living space.

Limited numbers of free radon test kits are now available at the Darien Health Department office.

Please call 203-656-7320 and make arrangements to pick up a test kit today!

For more information:

- CT DPH Radon Program: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/Environmental-Health/Radon/Radon-Program>